

History Fundamentals 1

**U.S. History
before Columbus
to 1865**
Boost confidence & test scores!

What Is History?

History is the study of the past. Studying the early history of the **United States** teaches you about the beginnings of our nation. You learn about **Native American cultures** and the growth of **European colonies in North America**. You analyze the causes and effects of the **American Revolution**. You also gain a better understanding of the challenges our nation faced before and during the **Civil War**, challenges that continue to influence our lives today.

[**ABOUT THIS GUIDE:** (1) two-letter state abbreviations are used in this guide except when referring to colony or territory prior to statehood; (2) the terms *ancient Indians*, *Native Americans*, and *American Indians* all refer to peoples who lived in the Americas before the arrival of Europeans; (3) in 1707, under the *Act of Union* with Scotland, England became known as Great Britain (Britain) and the English as British, although the terms *England* and *English* are still used; (4) terms used follow National Standards for the subject.]

Three Worlds Meet (Beginnings-1620)

- Millions of **Native Americans** live throughout the Americas.
- Europeans explore the Americas** searching for riches, land, and faster trade routes to Asia; results in converts to Christianity.
- Europeans build colonies** in the Americas and enslave Native Americans and Africans to work in those colonies.

 Christopher Columbus
reaches the Americas

 First Africans arrive in
what is now the U.S.

1492

1607

1619

 English found Jamestown
in Virginia Colony

c. 10000 BCE **Native Americans** live in the Americas before Europeans arrive (*See The First Americans on page 4 of this guide for a map showing where Native Americans live.*)

c. 1000 CE Norse explorer **Leif Eriksson** visits what is now eastern Canada, but makes no permanent settlements

1492 Searching for trade routes to Asia, **Christopher Columbus** lands on Caribbean island; claims region for Spain; builds first colony

1497 Searching for **Northwest Passage** (a water route to Asia), **John Cabot** explores eastern coast of present-day Canada for England

1503 Spain begins **encomienda** system, making it legal to enslave Native Americans in its colonies

1507 First **smallpox** epidemic reaches the Americas; thousands of Native Americans die

1510 Spanish king (Ferdinand) authorizes the shipment of a large group of **African slaves** to Santo Domingo, thus beginning the systematic importation of slaves into the Americas

1513 Spanish explorer **Ponce de León** lands in Florida, becoming first European to set foot in what is now U.S.

1519 **Hernando Cortez** conquers Aztec Empire in present-day Mexico; claims land for Spain; enslaves Native Americans

1534 **Jacques Cartier** claims much of what is now eastern Canada for France

1535 Colony of **New Spain** is formed, with capital at Mexico City

1539 Searching for gold, **Hernando de Soto** claims most of present-day Southeast U.S. for Spain

1541 Also searching for gold, **Francisco Vázquez de Coronado** claims most of present-day Southwest U.S. for Spain

1565 Spanish found **St. Augustine** in Florida, first permanent European settlement in U.S.

1588 English defeat **Spanish Armada** in Europe, increasing England's world power and colonial efforts in the Americas

1607 **Jamestown**, England's first permanent settlement in the Americas, is founded in Virginia Colony

1608 **Samuel de Champlain** founds **Quebec** in what is now eastern Canada as France's first permanent settlement and fur-trading post in the Americas

1609 **Henry Hudson** explores and claims Hudson River valley for the Dutch and present-day northern Canada for the English

1610 Spanish found **Santa Fe** in New Mexico (colony) and begin building missions in Southwest to convert Native Americans to Catholicism

1614 **John Smith**, a Jamestown founder, explores and maps New England coast for England

1616 **Smallpox epidemic** nearly wipes out Native American population in New England

1618 **Tobacco** becomes major cash crop of Virginia Colony

1619 The **House of Burgesses**, first representative assembly in North America, meets for the first time in Virginia

First Africans are brought to Jamestown as indentured servants, marking the beginnings of slavery in U.S.

1620 English **Pilgrims** found **Plymouth Colony** in Massachusetts; their **Mayflower Compact** establishes self-government


Juan Ponce de León

Colonization & Settlement (1621-1753)

- Thousands immigrate to the American colonies** to escape poverty, war, and religious and political persecution in Europe.
- Slave trade escalates** with use of triangular trade route.
- British form 13 colonies** along the Atlantic coast.
- Europeans struggle for **control of North America**.

 Use of triangular trade
route for African slaves begins

 British and French and allies
fight war in colonies

1644

1733

1744

 All 13 British colonies
have been founded

1625 Dutch found New Netherland Colony along Hudson River with capital at **New Amsterdam** (now New York City)

1630 **Massachusetts Bay Colony** is founded by English Puritans with strong self-government but no religious freedom

1634 English create **Maryland** colony as refuge for Catholics

1635 First **public school** in Americas opens in Boston

1636 Expelled from Massachusetts for dissent, **Roger Williams** founds **Rhode Island**; promotes religious freedom

 Colonists leave Massachusetts to found **Connecticut**
Harvard becomes first college in colonial America

1638 Swedish found **New Sweden** Colony (becomes **Delaware**)

 First colonial **printing press** is set up in Massachusetts

1644 New Englanders initiate **triangular trade route**, importing slaves from Africa in return for West Indies sugar to make rum

1653 **North Carolina** colony is formed

1654 First **Jewish settlers** arrive in North America

1663 **South Carolina** colony is formed

1664 British seize control of New Netherland; rename New Amsterdam **New York**; ignites war with Dutch

 First law in English colonies makes **slavery legal**
New Jersey Colony is founded as refuge for Quakers

1675-76 New England colonists defeat Native Americans in **King Philip's War**; most tribes are forced off their lands

1681 Quaker **William Penn** founds **Pennsylvania**; encourages immigration from different countries; promotes religious freedom

1682 **René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle** claims entire Mississippi River valley for France, names the region **Louisiana**
1692 Accused of **witchcraft**, 19 colonists are killed and hundreds more are imprisoned in Salem, Massachusetts

1717 Scotch-Irish and German **immigrants** begin to arrive in large numbers in colonies, lessening English majority of population

1729 In Philadelphia, **Benjamin Franklin** begins printing what becomes the most popular newspaper in the colonies

1733 **Georgia** is founded as haven for debtors in British prisons

 All **13 British colonies** now founded (*See The 13 British Colonies on page 4 of this guide for details about the colonies.*)

1734 The **Great Awakening**, a Protestant religious revival, begins its 30-year evangelical sweep through the colonies

1739 Deadliest colonial **slave revolt** occurs in South Carolina

1744-48 **King George's War** is fought between British and French and Native American allies over control of American lands and trade; neither side wins; tensions intensify in the colonies

1750 British colonial population is more than 1 million; an estimated 50% have immigrated as **indentured servants**


William Penn

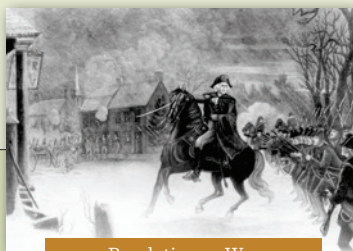
Revolution & a New Nation (1754-1783)

- British pass a series of new laws that impose **new taxes** and **restrict rights** in the colonies, causing widespread protests.
- **Colonists** declare their **independence** from Britain.
- Americans defeat the British in the **Revolutionary War**.
- The **United States of America** becomes a new nation.

American Revolution begins United States becomes a new nation

1775 **1776** **1783**
Declaration of Independence is approved

1754-63	Conflicting British and French claims in Ohio Valley lead to French and Indian War ; France loses the war; Britain gains most of present-day Canada and all French lands east of Mississippi River
1764	To help pay expenses of the war, Britain passes Sugar Act , first of several new taxes for colonists
1765	Stamp Act taxes all printed materials in the colonies; Americans unite in opposition
	Quartering Act requires colonists to house British soldiers
	Sons of Liberty , a secret radical group, begins organizing colonial resistance to new laws
	Colonists begin boycott of British goods
	Colonial representatives meet at Stamp Act Congress and send petition to King requesting repeal of unfair laws
1766	Parliament repeals Stamp Act , but passes Declaratory Act , stating its right to pass laws and collect taxes in the colonies
1767	Townshend Acts impose new taxes; spark colonial outrage
1768	Samuel Adams circulates a letter protesting “ taxation without representation ,” and calling for colonies to unite
	British troops occupy Boston to stop protests
1769	Royal governor of Virginia dissolves House of Burgesses
1770	British troops fire into mob, killing 5 colonists in Boston Massacre , igniting intense public protests
1773	Committees of Correspondence begin forming throughout colonies to coordinate actions against Britain
	Sons of Liberty protest British Tea Act by dumping tons of taxed tea into harbor; becomes known as Boston Tea Party
1774	Intolerable (Coercive) Acts close Boston’s port and limit colonial government in Massachusetts
	First Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia; calls Intolerable Acts illegal; asserts rights of colonists; calls for boycott of British goods and formation of militias
1775	Britain orders Massachusetts governor to enforce laws and suppress “open rebellion” in colonies by all necessary force
	Fighting breaks out between Massachusetts militia and British troops in Lexington and Concord ; marks beginning of American Revolution (Revolutionary War)
	Second Continental Congress meets; appoints George Washington as commander of new Continental Army
	Colonists (Patriots) lose first major fight with British at Battles of Breed’s Hill and Bunker Hill in Boston
1776	Thomas Paine ’s popular pamphlet <i>Common Sense</i> is published, calling for independence from Britain
	Congress approves Declaration of Independence (primary author is Thomas Jefferson)
1777	A turning point in the war, the Patriot victory at Battle of Saratoga proves to world Americans could win
1777-78	Battle-weary and out of money, Continental army spends brutally cold winter at Valley Forge , Pennsylvania
1778	French enter war as American ally against Britain
1781	States ratify Articles of Confederation as first plan of government for U.S.
	French and Americans surround British army at Yorktown , Virginia, forcing British surrender to George Washington
1783	Treaty of Paris officially ends American Revolution; grants U.S. independence ; defines U.S. borders (See The United States – 1783 , on page 4 of this guide, for map and details.)



Revolutionary War

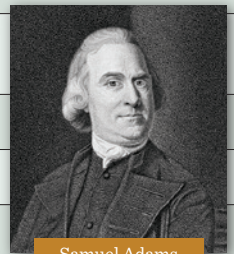
The Young Republic (1784-1802)

- **The new nation faces many challenges:** a weak central government; high debts and a depressed, unregulated economy; political factionalism; and threats from European powers.
- The **Constitution** gives a new plan of government for the U.S.
- The **Bill of Rights** guarantees personal freedoms.

Constitution replaces Articles of Confederation Bill of Rights added to Constitution

1788 **1789** **1791** **1800**
George Washington becomes 1st U.S. president U.S. capital moves to Washington, D.C.

1784-86	Americans suffer post-war economic depression with inflation, high taxes, farm foreclosures, and bankruptcies
1786	Shays’ Rebellion erupts with Massachusetts farmers taking arms to protest high taxes and penalties; reveals weaknesses of national government under Articles of Confederation
1787	Constitutional Convention meets in Philadelphia to revise Articles of Confederation
	Congress enacts Northwest Ordinance , establishing procedures for admitting territories as states; outlaws slavery in Northwest Territory (now IL, IN, OH, MI, MN, WI)
	After compromising on representation in Congress, delegates adopt new U.S. Constitution (See The Constitution on page 4 for details.)
	Alexander Hamilton , James Madison , and John Jay begin publishing Federalist Papers , advocating a strong federal government and approval of the new Constitution
1788	Anti-Federalists , such as Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams , demand amendments to Constitution that protect civil liberties
	U.S. Constitution is ratified by required 9 out of 13 states
1789	First U.S. Congress under Constitution meets in New York
	George Washington is unanimously elected as 1st U.S. president, with John Adams as vice president
	French Revolution begins in France (ends 1799); opposed by Federalists, supported by Anti-Federalists (including then U.S. ambassador to France, Thomas Jefferson)
	Congress creates first U.S. Army , totaling 1,000 men
	Congress passes Judiciary Act , setting up federal court system
1790	U.S. Supreme Court meets for first time
	Nation’s first census shows the population is nearly 4 million: African Americans make up about 19%; Native Americans are not counted
1791	Bank of the United States is formed to regulate currency
	Vermont becomes first new state to join U.S.
	All states ratify the Bill of Rights (first 10 amendments to the Constitution, guaranteeing many personal freedoms)
1792	Kentucky admitted as first state west of Appalachians
1793	George Washington is unanimously re-elected as president
	Washington issues a Proclamation of Neutrality , announcing U.S. plans to stay out of European wars
	Eli Whitney ’s invention of cotton gin greatly increases demand for slave labor in southern states
	First successful water-powered textile mill opens in Rhode Island; marks beginnings of manufacturing economy in northern states
1794	U.S. troops defeat confederacy of Native American tribes at Battle of Fallen Timbers in Ohio, opening up much of Midwest for settlement
1794-95	U.S. signs treaties with Britain and Spain that establish peaceful trade relations and settle borders of U.S.
1796	George Washington issues Farewell Address ; sets precedent of serving only 2 terms
1797	John Adams becomes 2nd president, with Thomas Jefferson as vice president
1798	U.S. fights undeclared 2-year naval war with France over shipping and trade disputes
	Controversial Alien and Sedition Acts effectively outlaw dissent and greatly expand federal powers
1800	U.S. capital moves to Washington, D.C. ; Congress opens first session there; Adams moves into White House
1801	Thomas Jefferson becomes 3rd president; marks first transition of presidential power from one party to another



Samuel Adams

Expansion & Change (1803-1849)

- The United States gains **new territories**, nearly tripling in size to extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific.
- Steamboats, roads, wagon trails, canals, and railroads improve **transportation and trade** and increase **western settlement**.
- New **inventions** and **immigration** change life in the U.S.

Louisiana Purchase doubles size of U.S.	U.S. wins Mexican-American War	
1803	1825	1848
Erie Canal opens		

1803	President Jefferson completes Louisiana Purchase ; U.S. gains from France huge region extending from Mississippi River to Rocky Mountains (<i>See map, Growth of the United States, on page 4 of this guide.</i>)
	Ohio becomes first state formed in Northwest Territory
1804	Lewis and Clark expedition begins to explore Louisiana Purchase lands; reaches Pacific Ocean in 1805
1807	Robert Fulton's first successful steamboat trip soon revolutionizes shipping and trade on Mississippi River system
1808	James Madison is elected as 4th president
1811	Construction of National Road begins, eventually connecting Maryland to Missouri (Atlantic Ocean to Mississippi River)
1812-14	British attacks on U.S. ships and encouragement of Native American attacks on settlers leads to War of 1812 ; neither side clearly wins, but causes wave of nationalism in U.S.
1816	James Monroe is elected as 5th president
1819	Spain cedes Florida to U.S. as repayment of debts
1820	Missouri Compromise temporarily settles sectional disputes over spread of slavery to new states and territories
1821	Santa Fe Trail opens, providing travel and trade route to Spanish-held Southwest; U.S. settlement in region increases
	Mexico gains independence from Spain; Southwest becomes Mexican territory; first U.S. settlers arrive in Texas
1823	Monroe Doctrine is announced, stating U.S. will actively prevent future European colonization in Western Hemisphere
1824	John Quincy Adams is elected as 6th president
	1825 Erie Canal opens, providing cheap, fast water transportation between Midwest and Atlantic; is immediate success
	1827 Baltimore & Ohio Railroad becomes first U.S. railroad company (by 1850, U.S. has more than 9,000 miles of tracks)
1828	Andrew Jackson is elected as 7th president
1830	Indian Removal Act passes, forcing all Native Americans living east of Mississippi River to move west
1831	Nat Turner leads slave rebellion in Virginia, causing many southern states to pass more stringent slave laws
1832	Invention of mechanical reaper , and later, the cast-steel plow (1837) greatly improve U.S. agriculture, especially in Midwest
1836	Martin Van Buren is elected as 8th president
1838	Thousands of Cherokee die during the "Trail of Tears," their forced march from Southeast to Indian Territory (present-day OK)
1840	William Henry Harrison is elected as 9th president
1841	Harrison dies; Vice President John Tyler becomes 10th president
1843	First wagon train reaches Oregon Country from Oregon Trail ; marks beginning of settlement in Pacific Northwest
1844	James K. Polk is elected as 11th president
1845	Phrase "manifest destiny" is first used to describe U.S. "destiny" to expand west to Pacific Ocean
	After 9 years as independent nation, Texas joins U.S.
1846	Border disputes and hopes of gaining new territories cause U.S. to declare war on Mexico, starting Mexican-American War
	Treaty with Britain sets U.S. northern border at 49th parallel
	First wave of refugees from Irish Potato Famine arrive in U.S. (by 1850, Irish make up 43% of foreign-born population)
1847	Fleeing persecution, Mormons found first settlement in Utah
1848	U.S. wins Mexican-American War; Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gives U.S. all Mexican lands north of Rio Grande
	Zachary Taylor is elected as 12th president
	Gold is discovered in California , sparking huge gold rush
1849	First Chinese immigrants arrive in U.S.



California Gold Rush

The Civil War & Its Causes (1850-1865)

- Sectional disputes over **slavery** increase.
- With the election of **Abraham Lincoln**, 11 **Southern states secede** from the Union and form the **Confederate States of America**.
- The Union and Confederacy fight a brutal **4-year civil war**.
- With Union victory, **slavery is abolished** in the United States.

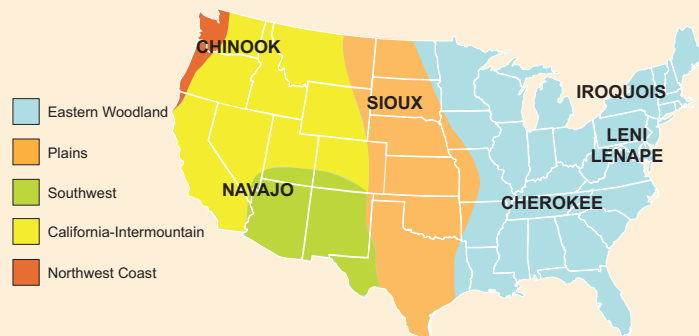
Abraham Lincoln elected president	Lincoln issues <i>Emancipation Proclamation</i>		
1860	1861	1863	1865
Civil War begins		Civil War ends with Union victory	

1850	Compromise of 1850 temporarily settles disputes over spread of slavery in territories gained from Mexican-American War ; California admitted as free state in exchange for harsher Fugitive Slave Act (illegal to help runaway slaves)
	Underground Railroad (network of people and routes to help slaves escape) changes its main destination to British provinces of Canada, where slavery is illegal
	President Taylor dies; Vice President Millard Fillmore becomes 13th president
1852	Harriet Beecher Stowe's anti-slavery novel Uncle Tom's Cabin is published; becomes best-selling novel of 1800s
	Franklin Pierce is elected as 14th president
1854	Kansas-Nebraska Act repeals <i>Missouri Compromise</i> , allowing territories to determine slave/free status by voting
1856	Several killed during period of fighting (1854–56) over vote in Kansas; becomes known as "Bleeding Kansas"
	James Buchanan is elected as 15th president
1857	In Dred Scott Decision , Supreme Court rules <i>Missouri Compromise</i> unconstitutional; declares slaves are not citizens
1858	During Lincoln-Douglas debates , U.S. Senate candidate Abraham Lincoln comes to national attention, declaring U.S. cannot survive as "half free and half slave"
1859	Abolitionist John Brown and followers capture federal arsenal in Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now WV) in attempt to spark slave revolt
1860	Abraham Lincoln is elected as 16th president
	Fearing Lincoln will end slavery everywhere, South Carolina secedes from Union
1861	Joining South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana secede from Union and form Confederate States of America (Confederacy) (<i>See map, The United States – 1861, on page 4 of this guide.</i>) Jefferson Davis chosen as president of Confederacy
	Texas secedes and joins the Confederacy
	Confederate soldiers seize Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor; marks beginning of American Civil War
	Lincoln calls for military volunteers
	Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee secede and join Confederacy
	Western counties of Virginia refuse to secede; create own government (join Union as West Virginia in 1863)
	Confederates win first major fight of war, First Battle of Bull Run , in Virginia; Union troops retreat to Washington, D.C.
1862	Union defeats Confederates at Battle of Antietam , in Maryland, the bloodiest single day of the war
1863	Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation , freeing slaves in Confederate states (but not in border states)
	Major Confederate defeat at Battle of Gettysburg , in Pennsylvania, proves a turning point in the war
	Lincoln gives famous Gettysburg Address at dedication of national cemetery at Gettysburg
1864	After capturing Atlanta, Union General William T. Sherman leads army to Savannah, destroying nearly everything in its path (Sherman's March to the Sea)
1865	Congress passes 13th Amendment , making slavery illegal
	Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrenders to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, VA, ending Civil War; more than 600,000 soldiers dead
	More than 4 million slaves gain freedom
	Lincoln is assassinated by John Wilkes Booth at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C.
	Vice President Andrew Johnson becomes 17th president; faces difficult task of reuniting and rebuilding the nation

The First Americans

No one knows for sure how or when people first came to live in the Americas. Many scientists think people came here from Asia more than 12,000 years ago by crossing a **land bridge** in what is now the Bering Strait.

- The earliest Americans were nomadic **hunters and gatherers** who lived in a much colder climate than today.
- Ancient Indians started **farming** about 7,000 years ago.
- Farming led to the development of civilizations.
- Olmec, Mayan, Toltec, Aztec, and Inca** civilizations developed in Central and South America.
- Mississippian Mound Builder** and **Ancient Puebloan** civilizations developed in North America.
- By the 1400s, an estimated 40 to 90 million Native Americans lived throughout the Americas. Each group lived in a unique environment that greatly influenced its ways of life.



The Constitution

The **Constitution divides powers** in the federal government among **three branches** and establishes a system of **checks and balances** to prevent any of the three branches from becoming too powerful.

Federal Government under U.S. Constitution

Branch	Executive	Legislative	Judicial
People	president, vice president, & cabinet members	members of Congress (Senate & House of Representatives)	Supreme Court justices, all federal court officers
Duties	enforces laws manages the government makes treaties heads armed forces	makes laws imposes taxes approves treaties approves appointments	makes decisions about laws explains treaties
Checks & Balances	nominates Supreme Court justices can veto bills passed by Congress	can reject nominated Supreme Court justices can override presidential veto	can rule a law or other action, such as a treaty, unconstitutional

The **Constitution also divides powers** between the **federal government** and **state governments**.

Federal Government	State Governments
Collects federal taxes	Collect state taxes
Sets up federal court systems	Set up state court systems
Regulates foreign and interstate commerce	Regulate commerce in own state
Prints and coins money	Run elections
Declares war and makes peace	Oversee public education
Makes treaties	Ratify amendments to U.S. Constitution
Oversees nation's military	
Admits new states	

The 13 British Colonies

Colonies	New England	Middle	Southern
	Massachusetts Rhode Island Connecticut New Hampshire	New York New Jersey Pennsylvania Delaware	Virginia Maryland North Carolina South Carolina Georgia
Estimated Population 1750	about 360,000	about 300,000	about 520,000
Largest Cities	Boston	Philadelphia & New York	Charleston
Economic Characteristics	less large-scale farming, more trade & industries; fishing, lumber, furs, shipbuilding	farming and milling wheat and other grains (known as the "breadbasket colonies")	plantation farming (tobacco, rice, indigo) typically worked by slaves & indentured servants
Social Characteristics	mostly English; Puritan church and town life very important	greater diversity, more religious freedom, more urban	more Catholics and Africans than other areas; more rural & isolated

The 13 colonies that united to fight for independence from Britain became the **first 13 United States**.

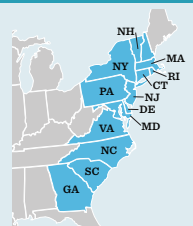
Growth of the United States



The United States - 1861



The United States - 1783



The **Treaty of Paris** officially ended the Revolutionary War on September 3, 1783. Under its terms, the British recognized the United States as an independent nation. The treaty also defined the borders of the United States: The Great Lakes and Canadian border became its northern boundary; the Mississippi River, its western boundary; and Spanish Florida, its southern boundary.

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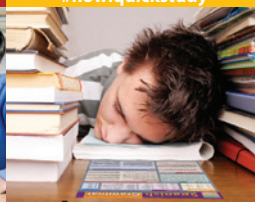
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